



YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2014

10.00 - 11.25 am in the Council Chamber, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, SY2 6ND

Responsible Officer: Tim Ward

Email: tim.ward@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 252739

Present

Shropshire Councillors

Councillor Joyce Barrow (Chairman)

Councillors Peggy Mullock (Vice Chairman), Andy Boddington, Robert Macey, Robert Tindall, Kevin Turley, David Turner, Paul Wynn, Roger Evans, Jane MacKenzie

Co-Opted Members (Voting)

Austin Atkinson and Dominic Wilson

1 Election of Chairman

1.1 Councillor Barrow was proposed by Councillor Turner and seconded by Councillor Wynn. Councillor Fraser was proposed by Councillor Evans and seconded by Councillor Boddington

1.2 RESOLVED

That Councillor Barrow be elected Chairman of the Young People's Scrutiny Committee for the forthcoming municipal year

2 Apologies and Substitutions

2.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Fraser, Councillor Pardy and Mr Hignett.

2.2 Councillor Evans substituted for Councillor Fraser and Councillor Mackenzie substituted for Councillor Pardy.

3 Appointment of Vice Chairman

3.1 RESOLVED

That Councillor Mullock be appointed Vice Chairman of the Young People's Scrutiny Committee for the forthcoming municipal year

4 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

4.1 None were disclosed.

5 Minutes

5.1 RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Young People's Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 30 April 2014 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5.2 The Director of Children's Services pointed out that the youth workers she referred to in paragraph 52.6 of the minutes were targeted youth workers in the Early Help/Social Care Team and not part of the Positive Activities Team.

6 Public Question Time

6.1 There were no questions from members of the public

7 Members' Question Time

7.1 There were no questions from Members

8 Transformation Activities - Special Education Needs Reforms and Provision

8.1 The Committee received the report of the Education Access and SEN Manager which summarised the changes for children and young people with Special Education Needs & Disability (SEND) in line with the Children & Families Bill which comes into force in September 2014, and more specifically the effect this will have on the statutory assessment process.

8.2 The Head of Education Improvement and Efficiency informed the meeting that there were two main focuses to the work that was being carried out: -

- Managing the changes for children and young people with special education needs and disability (SEND) arising from the Children and Families Bill; and
- The development of SEND Hubs

8.3 The Education Access and SEN Manager advised the meeting that the Children and Families Bill would come into force in September 2014 and that as part of this, the current SEND Code of Practice would be replaced by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years, which would create a more family centred system with closer working across health, education and social care and would see the introduction of personal budgets and Education, Health and Care Plans.

8.4 The Education Access and SEN Manager stated that a 0-25 SEND Strategic Board made up of partners from Health, Social Care, Education, Adult & Children's Services and Parent Carer Partnership Forums had been set up to oversee the changes. It was noted that there were 3 sub-groups covering the local Offer; personal budgets; and the joint assessment pathway. She added that plans to implement the reforms were progressing well.

- 8.5 The Education Access and SEN Manager reminded Members that in 2013 the Council's Cabinet had approved the development of a more localised provision for some children identified with SEN. She informed the meeting that the first specialist SEND Hub would be opening in 2015 at the Lakelands Academy and that when fully operational it would have places for 24 secondary aged children.
- 8.6 A Member asked whether there would be opportunity for secondary aged pupils currently being educated out of county to access the Hub. The Education Access and SEN Manager advised that if pupils fulfilled the relevant criteria then there would be opportunity for them to access the Hub.
- 8.7 A Member referred to paragraph 5.9 of the report and asked for more information regarding the mediation process. The Education Access and SEN Manager stated that under the new Code, mediation had to be offered to all parents to address dispute resolution. She went on to say that currently the Council was working with 13 other councils in the West Midlands to jointly commission independent mediation services and to set up a list of approved providers to provide families with some choice in service delivery.
- 8.8 The Chairman thanked the Officers for their full report and congratulated them on the progress made with implementing the changes.

8.9 **RESOLVED:**

That Members accept the position as set out in the report

9 Child Sexual Exploitation

- 9.1 The meeting received the report of the Service Specialist – Safeguarding which summarised the latest position in relation to Shropshire's response to Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE).
- 9.2 The Service Specialist reminded Members that there had been a drive by central government to tackle the issue of CSE at a national level and a directive to Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) to implement local strategies
- 9.3 The Service Specialist advised Members that the LSCB had developed a CSE strategy and practitioners' toolkit which was designed to assist with the identification, prevention and appropriate intervention in relation to CSE and trafficking, and had set up and multi agency CSE Panel which would provide some oversight of CSE cases. This Panel would agree how relevant organisations would co-operate and work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children experiencing or at risk of CSE.
- 9.4 Detective Inspector Brophy commented that the CSE panel had enabled the police to become more proactive in the detection of CSE. Members noted that Shropshire was not immune from CSE.

- 9.5 The Service Specialist informed the meeting that there had been an increase in the number of referrals to the CSE Panel which was a reflection of the fact that agencies were becoming better at identifying potential cases of CSE.
- 9.6 The Director of Children's Services commented that the role of local communities as the "eyes and ears" in the identification and reporting of CSE and getting the message out regarding identifying the signs of CSE was key. The Service Specialist advised that a sub-group of the CSE Panel was looking at how to engage with the community sector, and there was an opportunity for Members to participate in this work.
- 9.7 A Member asked what steps were being taken to encourage improvement in those schools that were not as good at identifying CSE. The Director of Children's Services commented that it was important that the leadership and management were engaged with the agenda and recognised that it can occur in any school. Officers have a regular input on this and the wider safeguarding agenda and raise the issue where it is identified, and determine appropriate action.
- 9.8 A Member commented that there was a role for Town and Parish Councils in getting the message out and that this could be done through the Local Joint Committees
- 9.9 The Director of Children's Services advised members that the Shropshire Safeguarding Children's Board website was a good source of information.
- 9.10 RESOLVED:
That the contents of the report be noted

10 School Funding

- 10.1 The Committee received the report of the Service Delivery Manager – Learning & Skills which outlined the current situation with regard to school funding and proposed changes to funding which may be made in the future
- 10.2 The Service Delivery Manager reminded members that school funding had gone through, and continued to go through a period of significant reform and that significant change in how local authorities distributed funding to schools had taken place in the 2013-14 and 2014-15 financial years. He added that in March 2014 the Government had launched a consultation into the next phase of reforms which sought to address the unfairness of the current funding system and identify additional funding to those authorities least fairly funded. He informed members that Shropshire Council had been identified as one of the Councils that would benefit from the reforms and that early indications were that this would lead to an increase of £8.9 million in the 2015 - 16 Direct Schools Grant (DSG).
- 10.3 The Service Delivery Manager reminded members that the DSG was distributed via a local funding formula, based on allowable factors which were set out by government, and that the local formula was developed by a Task and Finish Group

of the Schools Forum before being approved by Council. He added that to prevent too much turbulence in funding occurring there was a statutory protection in the form of the minimum funding guarantee (MFG) which ensured that the year on year reduction in per pupil funding was not greater than 1.5%

- 10.4 The Service Delivery Manager commented that projected reduction of over 1600 pupils in the period 2013 – 2018 represented a major funding challenge which could potentially mean a reduction of £6.7 million in the DSG over this period. He advised the meeting that work was being undertaken by the Schools Forum to consider the impact of continued falling rolls and the changes to the national funding formula. Member's noted that the use of collaborative working, the exploration of alternative models of provision and the more efficient use of resources was being encouraged.
- 10.5 A Member expressed concern that the provision of free school meals (FSM) to KS1 pupils may result in a reduction in the amount of pupil premium schools received as this was based on the number of pupils registered for free school meals, and asked what steps were being taken to ensure that schools and parents were aware of this. The Service Delivery Manager informed him that schools and governing bodies had been reminded of the importance of this. A Member suggested that a press release be issued to explain the importance of registering for FSM in order to gain the maximum amount of pupil premium. This was agreed.
- 10.6 A Member asked how the extra funding arising from the changes that were currently out for consultation would be distributed. The Service Delivery Manager advised him that it would be distributed through the local funding formula and that this would be developed by the Schools Forum Task and Finish Group and a full consultation would be carried out prior to this being agreed. He added that even though there was extra funding, some schools would not see an increase in their budget due to the fact that the extra funding would negate the MFG.
- 10.7 The Deputy Portfolio Holder Children's Services commented that falling school rolls were a major challenge. Mr Atkinson commented that the real challenge was getting individual schools to accept the challenge. The Service Delivery Manager informed the meeting that all schools will receive a five year profile of pupil numbers and estimated financial data in order to enable schools to look at options. The Director of Children's Services commented that schools needed to work together to find local solutions to the challenge.
- 10.8 A Member asked that a further report be made to a future meeting. This was agreed.
- 10.9 RESOLVED:
- That the current position in relation to school funding was noted

11 Health Update

- 11.1 The Committee received the report of the Director of Public Health which provided an overview of child health in Shropshire and updated the Committee on work being undertaken by the Public Health Department.
- 11.2 The Public Health Analyst presented the Child Health Profile at Appendix 1 of the report. She informed the meeting that there was only 1 of the 32 indicators where Shropshire was significantly worse than the English average which was the percentage of mothers' breastfeeding at 6 to 8 weeks. The Chair commented that breastfeeding was important and mothers should be encouraged to continue with it. The Associate Director of Public Health commented that a lot of work was being done around the subject of breastfeeding and that some promising results were being seen.
- 11.3 The Associate Director of Public Health informed the meeting that when the responsibility for the commissioning of School Nursing services passed to Public Health from the PCT it had been agreed that the current contract would be extended whilst a major review of the service was undertaken. She added that a wide consultation had taken place with all partners and a shared vision had been developed and an action plan had been drawn up. She advised the meeting that a new contract specification was being drawn up and a tendering process would be undertaken with a view to the new service starting in January 2015.
- 11.4 The Associate Director of Public Health advised the meeting that the Department of Health had produced a Health Visitor Implementation Plan in 2011 which aimed to increase health visitor numbers and set out the level of service families could expect. She added that from 1 April 2015 additional health visitors would be in post and that Shropshire would receive additional funding for the establishment of a Family Nurse Partnership to work with first time parents under the age of 20 to provide support during the first two years after birth.
- 11.5 The Chairman thanked Officers for attending the meeting and for their very comprehensive report.

12 Additional Item - Performance Dashboards

- 12.1 The Chairman explained that this item had been added to the agenda following a meeting of the Performance Management Scrutiny Committee where it had been requested that the relevant performance dashboards be presented to each of the Scrutiny Committees.
- 12.2 The Deputy Portfolio Holder for Performance presented the dashboards.
- 12.3 The Performance Manager advised the meeting that the way data would be set out in a different way as in the past, data had been presented around priorities whereas in the future it would be presented around outcomes.
- 12.4 The Chairman thanked Officers' for their report and commented that the Committee would continue to receive regular performance reports.

13 Work Programme

- 13.1 The meeting received copies of the current Scrutiny Work Programme and the Cabinet Forward Plan.
- 13.2 The Chairman asked Members to let her know of any other topics they would like to see on the Committee's Work Programme.

14 Date of Next Meeting

- 14.1 Members were reminded that the next meeting of the Committee would be held at 10.00am on Wednesday 16 July 2014 at The Shirehall

Signed (Chairman)

Date: